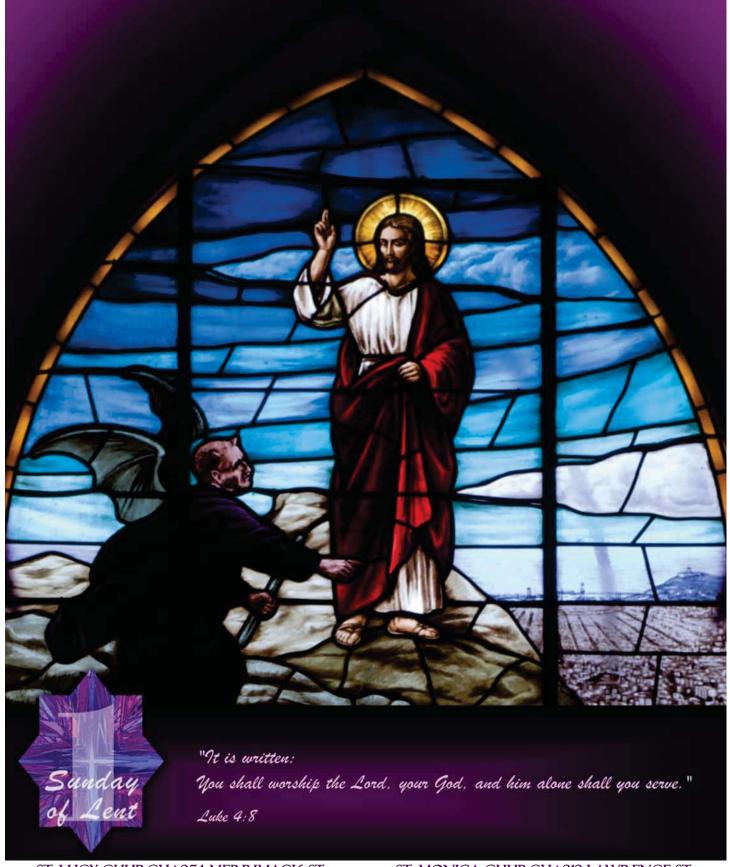
METHUEN CATHOLIC | MAR 09

THE PARISHES OF ST. MONICA AND ST. LUCY

2025



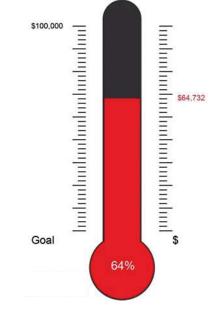
Dear Brothers and Sisters.

I would like thank you for hearing the call and answering it! We met our \$5,000 matching challenge. Unbelievably, thank God, another benefactor from St. Monica's has stepped forward with a second \$5,000 matching donation challenge for St. Monica's Grand Annual. So we're extending the Grand Annual for another week, and invite parishioners to donate today. Once again, I want to thank you for your faith and generosity in the time, talent, and treasure you have poured into our parish family, and thank you for your support of our Grand Annual appeal.

Yours in Christ, Fr. Marcos T. Pena Portillo







DEACON JOHN KOBRENSKI

Lent has started. Most of us know that Lent is a 40-day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection on Easter. But we are also called to self-discipline. The giving of alms is one way to share God's gifts—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. St John Chrysostom tells us, "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours but theirs."

Abstinence from meat on the Fridays of Lent is something we are required to practice. The giving up of meat on one day of the week for five or six weeks is one of the sacrifices the Church asks us to make during this time of penance. Why?

Abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, might provoke questions in us or in our family and friends. They are watching us (even if we are unaware of it) and wondering, "Why do they do this?," "What does this practice or sign signify?," "Why is it important to them?". We live in a world where much of our communication is based, not just on words, but on signs and symbols as well. So, what we do communicates something to others.

Before Vatican II, Catholics we obliged to abstain from meat every Friday of the year. That obligation was lifted, and meat was allowed on all Fridays of the year except during Lent. We were still required to do other penances or abstentions of our own choosing but were not required to give up meat.

After a period of experiencing the effects of lifting of the precepts on abstinence from meat, the bishops of England and Wales felt the effect wasn't what they intended. Many had taken this permission to eat meat on Friday as a sign that we no longer needed to do any penance at all on Friday, whereas the intention was that we should all choose a variety of different penances but still do penance.

On May 14, 2011, it was announced that the Bishops of England and Wales were re-establishing the requirement, for all who are 14 years of age or older, to abstain from meat on all Fridays of the year. This is now a legally established moral obligation and took effect on September 16, 2011.

The bishops announced that they did this for three reasons. The first reason was for Catholic identity. By all doing the same penance, even a small one like abstaining from meat, we are doing something together and establishing a common identity. Hopefully, this would give Catholics a clear and distinctive mark or their own Catholic identity, that others would take note of.

Second, it would be a sign of a common witness to the world about what Catholics believe and practice; namely, the value of self-denial and of union with Christ on the Cross.

And finally, it will help increase our general awareness of the importance of doing penance, especially of penance on every Friday of the year. Fridays have always been a day of penance for the Church and attempts to restructure or give that penance a different form have had a response of less enthusiasm in some parts of the world than in others.

And what does that mean for us here in the United States. It's very important to realize that Fridays are an important day in the Church calendar, not just during Lent, but all year long. It's the day on which Our Lord died and there has been, from the earliest days of the Church, a desire and means of honoring that day.

The way chosen by the bishops of England and Wales was the right choice for them. The Holy Spirit guided them to this decision. Here we are given our own choices to keep abstinence in a personally selected way. Let us make that choice with open eyes. Are we just free to do no penance on Fridays because we're allowed to eat meat? Is it something we can just forget about during the year? No, you're still required to do some small, personally selected penance on Fridays. If you can't decide on how to do penance on the Fridays of the year, just use the old standby. Refrain from meat. It can 't hurt and may cause someone to notice and be drawn to the Catholic Church. It can be as simple as that. Jesus works in his own ways.



Sodality Winter Giving Program

Members of the Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality donated 13 construction bags filled with winter clothing, coats, boots and handmade crocheted hats to The Movement Family in February, which supports the homeless and unsheltered population in the Merrimack Valley! We are honored to help this organization and their clientele!

In March the 'Read Across America' program encourages children to celebrate Dr. Seuss birthday by reading appropriate books. Members of the Sodality contributed dozens of books to the Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley to promote an interest in reading children's books and young adult books! Much appreciation for the generosity of our Sodality members in supporting both children and adults in need of assistance. On March 7th, members made 100 bagged lunches for the homeless served by Lazarus House. Sodality is proud to support our charitable outreach programs and welcomes all interested women to join our organization.

Our next meeting will be held on March 9th following the 10:30 mass at St. Lucy Church.





THE MARIE RIVIER ASSOCIATES (MRA) OF THE PRESENTATION OF MARY

March 13th 9:30-11:30am St. Lucy Lower Church Hall

Any and all parishioners from St. Monica & St. Lucy are invited to attend.

Our book this year is

Mysteries of the Virgin Mary: Living our Lady's Graces

Please contact Maureen Slattery at 978-683-0589 or by email at twigs5mcs@gmail.com to obtain a copy of the book.

MESSAGE FROM FR. GIANNI (1970-2025)

I recall that the famous American humorist, Mark Twain, who noted that the announcement of his death was "premature"!

Now that I reside at the retirement home for Boston Priests (Regina Cleri) which is dedicated to Mary (Queen of the Clergy), I am happy and joyful for my privilege in sharing in the priesthood of the Lord Jesus these past 55 years.

Long ago, I remember a seminary teacher remarking that we are ordained priests to "love and serve" God's people - now, I appreciate this message to his first apostles (the first priests) and I better understand what the Lord said so long ago.

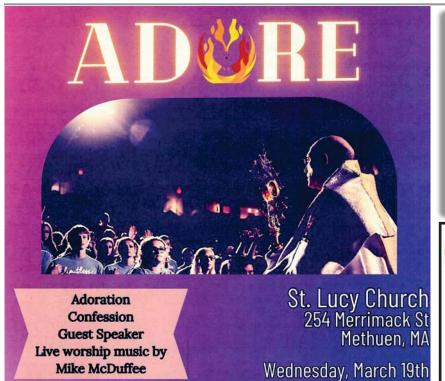
THANK YOU for all you do for your Church, your Parish, and your Priests.

Fr. Gianni



Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election and Calling Candidates to Continuing Conversion

This Sunday our catechumen John concludes the *Period of the Catechumenate* and he will begin his final preparation to be baptized, confirmed, and to receive the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. We will celebrate the *Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election* at the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Lucy Church. The rite offers our parishes the opportunity to send John forth to the celebration of Election assured of our parishes' care and support. The *Rite of Election* is the focal point of the Church's concern for the catechumens; admission to Election belongs to the Bishop.





Please join us for refreshments

Sunday, March 16th & 30th

St. Monica School Hall following the 9:000am Mass

Sunday, March 16th

St. Lucy Lower Church Hall following the 10:30am Mass

ALL ARE WELCOME!



The Knights of Columbus will be leading the monthly Rosary, this Wednesday, March 12th, for St. Monica School parents in the

Chapel. All parents of students are welcome to attend. Just stop in before picking up children from school. The praying of the Rosary will begin at 1:15 PM. Rosaries and prayer cards will be provided. Come by and pray for your own personal intentions!



Mike McDuffee has been leading worship in the Catholic Church since he was 12 years old. He currently lives

Free Will Offerings Accepted



LENTEN CALENDAR

MONDAYS | Pilgrimage of Hope: Reflections on the Jubilee Year 6-7pm | St. Monica Church | Fr. Michael Harvey

TUESDAYS | Rosary & Meditation 6-7pm | Gethsemane Chapel | Deacons WEDNESDAYS | Eucharistic Adoration & Confessions 6-7pm | St. Lucy Church | Fr. Marcos Pena

THURSDAYS | Evangelization & the Church Class 7-8pm | St. Lucy Schoolhouse | Fr. Marcos Pena

FRIDAYS | Stations of the Cross & Lenten Meal 6-7pm | St. Lucy Church SATURDAYS | Eucharistic Adoration 9:30am-2:30pm | Gethsemane Chapel

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven, may the *faith* you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of *charity* enkindled in our hearts by the Holy spirit, reawaken in us the blessed *hope* for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.

FEBRUARY 22 & 23

St. Monica - \$7,768.00

St. Lucy - \$4,504.00

Weekly Offertory needed to sustain parish operations: St. Monica - \$10,000 | St. Lucy - \$6,000 Thank you for your continued generous contribution to the mission of our parishes.



Yes, I CAN...We are in need of Canned Carrots, Canned Chicken, Canned Fruit, Pancake Mix & Pancake Syrup. Donations can be dropped off anytime at the entrances to St. Lucy Church and the side door of Gethsemane Chapel at St. Monica Church.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Mondays @ 10 am. Please email all bulletin notices to parishoffice.stlm@gmail.com.

GETHSEMANE CHAPEL AT ST. MONICA CHURCH Open 7 days per week from 6am-7pm CHAPEL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ST. LUCY CANDLE SHRINE Open Mon-Sat from 9am-5pm

BAPTISMS 2nd Sunday of the month, 2:00pm at St. Monica's | 3rd Sunday of the month, 2:00pm at St. Lucy's Please call the Parish Offices at least 2 months in advance to schedule.

MARRIAGES Please call the Parish Offices at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date and before booking a reception hall.

MASS SCHEDULE SAT 4 pm (VIGIL) both parishes

SUN 9 am & 12 pm St. Monica

10:30 am St. Lucy

MON/TUES/THURS/FRI 9 am St. Lucy

SATURDAY 9 am St. Monica

CONFESSIONS

SAT 3-3:45pm at both parishes

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frmarcosmethuen@gmail.com

Fr. Michael Harvey
Deacon John Kobrenski
Deacon John Pierce
Kera Mansour
Parochial Vicar
Permanent Deacon
Senior Deacon
Business Manager

methuencatholic@gmail.com

Karl Jackson Director of Parish Life

faithformation.stlm@gmail.com

Joseph Lundin Music Director

Christine Ryan Administrative Assistant

parishoffice.stlm@gmail.com



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SCHOOL STAFF

Donna Henderson Principal

Ann Marie Collins Administrative Assistant

smsoffice@methuencatholic.org

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 91:15-16

The Lord, my strength and saviour, has led me out to freedom, for the Lord delights in me.

ENTRANCE HYMN

Lord, Who throughout these forty days



FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Moses spoke to the people, saying: "The priest shall receive the basket from you and shall set it in front of the altar of the LORD, your God. Then you shall declare before the Lord, your God, 'My father was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien. But there he became a nation great, strong, and numerous. When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and he heard our cry and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. He brought us out of Egypt with his strong hand and outstretched arm, with terrifying power, with signs and wonders; and bringing us into this country, he gave us this land flowing with milk and honey. Therefore, I have now brought you the firstfruits of the products of the soil which you, O LORD, have given me.' And having set them before the LORD, your God, you shall bow down in his presence."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

<u>Psalm 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 R.</u>

R. Be with me, Lord, When I am in trouble

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty say to the LORD, "My refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust. **R**.

No evil shall befall you, nor shall affliction come near your tent For to his angels he has given command about you, that they guard you in all your ways. **R.**

Upon their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the asp and the viper; you shall trample down the lion and the dragon. **R.**

Because he clings to me, I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he acknowledges my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him

I will be with him in distress; I will deliver him and glorify him. **R**.

SECOND READING

Romans 10:8-13

Brothers and sisters: What does Scripture say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart —that is, the word of faith that we preach—, for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. For the Scripture says, No one who believes in him will be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, enriching all who call upon him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 4:4b

R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory

One does not live on bread alone

But by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God

R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory

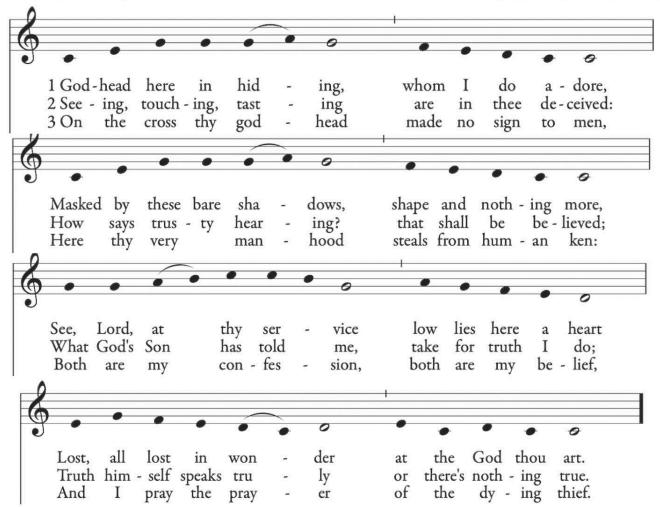
Luke 4:1-13

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, One does not live on bread alone." Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve." Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone." Jesus said to him in reply, "It also says, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test." When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.



GOSPEL

Godhead Here in Hiding





PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



ST. MONICA PARISH

Saturday, March 8

9:00am Joseph Indoccio 4:00pm Thomas Verzi

Sunday, March 9

9:00am Amy Waterworth

Charlie & Rose Hanafin

Flor Salgado Dick Doherty

12:00pm For the Parishioners of

St. Lucy & St. Monica

Saturday, March 15

9:00am To St. Anthony for favors received

4:00pm Gloria Marcoux

Sunday, March 16

9:00am Monica Ofedu (living)

Deceased Members of the Cutulli Family

Marilee Ralph

12:00pm Maurice Larivierre, Sr.

Maurice Larivierrre, Jr.

Delio Areias Donald M. Cronin Robert LaPiana

Fred J. & Jenny Bonaccorsi Joseph F. Bonaccorsi

ST. LUCY PARISH

Saturday, March 8

4:00pm Leo & Margaret Jewitt

Sunday, March 9

10:30am Guy & Marie-Paule Labrie

Deceased Members of the BVM Sodality Deceased Members of the Fichera, Fiorentino & Consoli Families Lucy, Rose & Salvatore Sapuppo and

Deceased Members of their family

Monday, March 10

9:00am Rev. Michael K. Harvey (birthday)

Tuesday, March 11

9:00am Catherine Goff

Wednesday, March 12

9:00am Perry & Clara Autiello

Thursday, March 13

9:00am Evelvn Plummer

Joseph Collins Fr. Raymond Stingle

Friday, March 14

9:00am Joseph Chamoun (living)

Saturday, March 15

4:00pm For the Parishioners of

St. Lucy & St. Monica

Sunday, March 16

10:30am Busty & Tina Consoli

Lucille Guimond

William York and the Deceased Members

of the York Family Jim Gablosky

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

DAY	DATE	PRIEST	SEMINARIAN
Sun	03/09/25	Fr. William Kremmell	Juan Cano RMS Boston
Mon	03/10/25	Fr. Rodney Copp	Luca Contini RMS Boston
Tues	03/11/25	Fr. William Murphy	Sean McKeown SJS Boston
Wed	03/12/25	Fr. Denis Nakkeeran	Thien Ngo SJS Hanoi
Thurs	03/13/25	Fr. Robert E. Sullivan	Lich Nguyễn SJS Hanoi
Fri	03/14/25	Fr. Bryan Parrish	Jose Leonardo Rojas Gonzalez OFM, Cap
Sat	03/15/25	Fr. Michael Harvey	Connor Roukey SJS Boston



PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for Carolyn, Adrienne M., Terry, Chris C., Joy M., William T., Chris B., Kathy P., Jeff H., Brian V., Mike B., Louie C., Phyllis T. & Patrice K.

Please pray for Samuel Indurre, Robin Licata, Carolyn Winn, Joseph Rapazzo & William Barry whose funerals we recently offered. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



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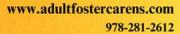
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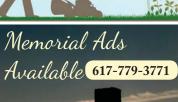
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